(iii) Conduct of feasibility studies with respect to products, infrastructure requirements;

(iv) Upgradation of technical skills of supervisory, technical and managerial personnel of growers and manufacturers - exporters through training in India.

(v) Research and development to be conducted by the research institutions as a part of the export enhancement efforts;

(vi) Air Freight subsidy for exports by air of certain horticultural, floricultural and selected vegetables to specified destinations.

The amount of financial assistance provided by APEDA during the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 is as follows:-

Rs. in Lakhs

1993-94	511.65
1994-95	615.14
1995-96	675.00

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e). Do not arise.

Anti-Defection Law

2001 SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to reformulate the anti-defection law;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be reformulated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) to (c). The question as to whether an appeallate authority should be provided to hear appeals from the decisions of Presiding Officers is proposed to be discussed by the Government with leaders of various political parties and in case a consensus emerges for making amendments in the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, Government would consider bringing forward a bill for the purpose.

Smuggling of Gold

2002. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the smuggling of gold is still going on in the country in spite of the introduction of the liberalised gold policy;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check it; and

(c) the gold seized during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Based on statistics of contraband gold seized and intelligence reports pertaining to smuggling of gold there appears to be a decline in smuggling of gold. However, smuggling of gold is still being noticed and a definite trend regarding quantum of smuggling cannot be stated with certainly due to clandestine nature of smuggling activities.

(b) Measures taken to prevent smuggling of gold into the country include liberalized import of gold since 1992 under passenger baggage scheme to make large quantitites of legally imported gold available for consumption in India, high alert maintained by anti smuggling agencies to detect and prevent smuggling of gold into the country by surveillance over sensitive areas, targeting of intelligence and use of sophisticated equipments like metal detectors, colour baggage X-ray machines etc. in ports and airports.

(c) The value of gold seized during the last three years is as follows:

Year	Gold Seized (Rs. in lakhs)
1993-94	5502
1994-95	5543
1995-96	5087

[Translation]

Trade Agreement with Nepal

2003. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the Indo-Nepal trade ties;

(b) if so, the details of areas selected for this purpose;

(c) whether the Government have signed any new trade agreement with Nepal recently; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the said agreement is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). India and Nepal are both committed to increasing their bilateral trade within the framework of the Indo-Nepal Trade Treaty of 1991. Various aspects bilateral

trade are reviewed from time to time by the Inter Governmental Committee on Trade headed by the two Commerce Secretaries. In this connection, the question of providing greater access into the Indian market for goods manufactured in Nepal has been under discussion.

(c) No new trade agreement has been signed with Nepal recently.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Tax Evasion

2004. SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases in which the evasion of income tax, central excise and customs have come to light in the last three years, State-wise and Union Territory-wise;

(b) whether any equiry has been conducted by the Government in this regard; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Data in this regard are not maintained State/Union Territory-wise.

(b) and (c). Enquiries/investigations are conducted whenever any specific information of tax evasion is recieved.

[Tranlation]

Plan to Increase Exports

2005. SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to chalk-out any target based programme to increase exports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c). Export performance is dependent on a number of factors including the demand for the products, the economic conditions in the countries importing such products, competition from other countries exporting such products, export promotion efforts, etc. However, based on the past performance, the Commerce Ministry is projecting to sustain a 20% export growth in dollar terms for the Year 1996-97.

Export promotion is a continuous activity and steps are taken from time to time boost exports in consultation with trade and industry and export promotional organisations. Measures taken to step up exports include holding of trade fairs and exhibitions, simplification of import and export-policy procedures, improving efficiency and competitiveness, focussing on quality and technology upgradation and efforts to actively involve the State Governments in export promotion.

[English]

Increase in Capacity of Ports in Orissa

2006. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd. has signed any agreement with the Government of Orissa to increase handling capacity of ports in Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). MMTC Limited has signed an MOU with the Government of Orissa on 15th February,1996 for commissioning a detailed feasibility study for integrated development of Gopalpur Port from fair weather to all weather deep water direct berthing port.

[Translation]

Import of Textiles

2008. SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH :
SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to import textiles;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the quantum of textiles imported during the year 1995-96; and

(d) the foreign exchange spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA). (a) and (b) Government do not propose to import textiles.

(c) and (d). The foreign exchange equivalent of Rs.3258.48 corores (approximately) were spent on the import to textiles during 1995-96.